



Budget Direction

Resilience Hubs

Background:

On April 8, 2021, City Council passed Resolution 20210408-028, directing the City Manager to engage city departments, the Austin Independent School District, Travis County, and the community to conduct an assessment of potential resilience hub locations to serve as emergency shelters and community spaces; to study and plan for providing these critical facilities with redundant power and water capability; and to report back to the Council with necessary budget recommendations, funding strategies, and intergovernmental agreements to accomplish these goals.

The Resolution directed the City Manager to:

- Engage the Office of Sustainability, the Chief Resilience Officer, the Equity Office, Homeland and Security Management, Austin Energy, Austin Water, Watershed Protection, Parks and Recreation and other relevant departments as well as the Austin Independent School District, other school districts, Travis County, the Pecan Street Project, and the Austin Community College to work with communities to conduct a resilience hub assessment to identify potential locations throughout the City to serve as resilience hubs, including schools, recreation centers, libraries, and other trusted, well-known, community-managed facilities.
- Explore options for “passive survivability” and ensure that these facilities have redundant power and water through the installation of solar power, battery storage, and rainwater or potable water cisterns such that during an emergency these facilities can disconnect from traditional infrastructure and operate independently and reliably and in a manner capable of sustaining operations during an extended power outage.
- Ensure that these facilities function in non-emergency conditions in ways that meet existing departmental and community goals with regard to stormwater management, water conservation, community solar generation, and other Council-approved and implemented policy directions.
- Ensure that during non-emergency conditions, these facilities can provide space and programming for community-building efforts which increase resilience and recovery when emergencies occur.
- Include not only the necessary facilities planning but also engagement with each community to ensure adequate communications, personnel, transportation, and supplies and resources. Such engagement should also ensure that the process and the hubs themselves embody the principles articulated by the Urban Sustainability Director Networks Resilience Hubs Guidance and Analysis Tools to center the needs of the most



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vulnerable and affected community members, including ensuring communities successfully receive communications in their native languages.

- Return to Council no later than June 2021 with a base budget sufficient to fund recommendations and strategies to design and equip hubs for disasters, including the necessary power and water redundancies, and any intergovernmental memoranda necessary to memorialize community partnerships toward the creation of resilience hubs. The City Manager shall ensure that each potential resilience hub be located within a 15-minute walkshed of each neighborhood within Austin or within a 15-minute walkshed of an activity center, activity corridor, or the transit priority network.
- Return to Council no later than June 2021 with budget recommendations, funding strategies, and a timeline for creating a community-wide resilience hub plan sufficient to serve all Austinites during emergencies. By this same date, the City Manager shall present Council with a plan, budget recommendations, funding strategies, and a timeline for designing and equipping an initial six pilot hubs for disasters, including the necessary power and water redundancies. By the same date, the City Manager shall present to Council any intergovernmental memoranda necessary to memorialize community partnerships necessary to create resilience hubs.

The city staff's "Nourish Austin" proposal found that "many low-income residents lost days of work and struggled to purchase food, adding to the trauma and stress caused by the other effects of the storm. As disruptive and extreme weather events will likely increase in the future, the City and its partners can strengthen residents' resilience and swift recovery by building and strengthening disaster-resilient food systems infrastructure, through investments in long-term nonperishable food storage in designated resilience hubs."

During the Council's deliberations regarding American Rescue Plan Act funding, Council allocated \$3 million to the community resilience hubs as directed in Resolution No. 20210408-028. On June 11, 2021, staff issued a responsive memo which stated that staff have been "working diligently on the response to this Council Resolution, in collaboration with over 30 individuals from 17 City departments. In addition, staff has been convening critical conversations with external partners including Travis County, Central Health, and AISD, including options for Resilience Hub locations and potential shared funding models."

Per the response to Budget Question #55, Public Works Department "is anticipated to assist with project management for project delivery of future Resilience Hub pilot projects located at City facilities. In addition, Austin Water is committed to funding water resiliency features at Resilience Hub pilot projects through conservation programs and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding sources. The \$3.0 million in ARPA funding is estimated to be sufficient for staff to launch several initial Resilience Hub pilot projects in collaboration with AISD, in addition to creating a community-wide Resilience Hub Plan. Once several initial Resilience Hub pilots are completed and a Plan has been delivered, more information will become available regarding additional funding."



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Direction:

The City Manager is directed to provide the Council with monthly updates to Council via memorandum or briefings to the Public Health Committee regarding the personnel resources throughout the City of Austin that are assigned to the deliverables in response to Resolution No. 20210408-028; project milestones; updates with intergovernmental partners, especially Travis County and local ISDs; the deployment of the allocated ARPA, General Fund, and CIP funds; any emerging funding needs; and all other relevant updates related to the successful implementation of Resolution No. 20210408-028.



Downtown Austin Community Court

Background:

In February 2020, Council approved Resolution No. 20200220-044, directing the City Manager to provide recommendations to the Council no later than June 11, 2020, on a plan for the redevelopment of One Texas Center including a range of community benefits that could be realized on this property as envisioned in the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan and to determine any synergies that may result from an alignment with the redevelopment of the Statesman Tract.

On June 14, 2021, staff issued a memo regarding the temporary relocation of the Downtown Austin Community Court to One Texas Center (OTC) at 505 Barton Springs Road. Currently, DACC operates virtual judicial services and provides case management services out of the Terrazas Branch Library, while administrative staff members work at leased space located at 719 East 6th Street. The memo states that the “OTC location is an interim measure for approximately 18-24 months while a permanent location is identified for DACC operations. Staff is exploring the renovation of the Municipal Court Building located at 700 E. 7th Street as a long-term solution. If this solution proves to be feasible, it will take some time to make the needed renovations.”

Direction:

The City Manager is directed to identify and confirm the DACC’s permanent location by September 15, 2021. Further, if the site requires renovation or new construction, this work should begin by January 1, 2022, with a projected end date no later than May 2023.

Understanding that individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness reside throughout our community, the City Manager is directed to explore the creation of storage options and satellite DACC facilities to serve individuals in areas which currently have few facilities serving individuals experiencing homelessness. The City Manager is directed to report back to Council with his findings, cost estimates, and timeline for implementation no later than October 1, 2021.

The City Manager is directed to implement the direction provided in Resolution No. 20200221-044 and to establish a timeline of actions for the redevelopment of One Texas Center by October 1, 2021.

Lastly, the City Manager is directed to prioritize the unmet HOST and DACC needs in the April 16, 2021, memorandum in the forthcoming Funding Plan directed in the Council resolution regarding the ARPA framework.



Workforce Development and Capacity Building for Case Managers

Background:

On June 10, 2021, Council approved Resolution 20210610-077, directing the City Manager to work closely with Workforce Solutions, Capital Idea, and any other like organizations to determine how the City can best invest those dollars to help meet the gap in cases of individuals experiencing homelessness as well as to create a pipeline of case workers/case managers who can support the other elements of the plan to end homelessness.

Per the response to Budget Question #12, “the FY 2021-22 Proposed Budget does not include any funding for capacity building within the homelessness response system. On June 10, 2021, City Council approved \$500,000 in funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation to the City of Austin for purposes of providing organizational support, scaling up capacity in the community for provision of homeless services, and supporting organizational capacity building among partner nonprofits. This funding did not, however, provide for additional positions.”

Direction:

The City Manager is directed to implement the direction provided in Resolution No. 20210610-077 and to use ARPA or other sources of funding to support organizational capacity for nonprofits that serve individuals experiencing homelessness through the training and recruitment of additional case managers.



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Annual Cost-of-Living Adjustments and Social Service Contracts

The City Manager is directed to consider options for applying adjustments to existing social service contracts to reflect cost-of-living increases. The City Manager is directed to return to the Public Health Committee on October 6, 2021, with the estimated costs for such an action and other relevant information in response to this budget rider.



Housing Trust Fund

Background:

The Housing Trust Fund was created by Ordinance No. 000420-33 with intention to:

- (1) contribute to the economic development of the City; and*
- (2) assist the City in its objectives to preserve and create reasonably priced housing for City residents, to revitalize neighborhoods, and to build the City's tax base.*

Council passed Resolution No. 20151217-074, directing the City Manager to increase the percentage of tax revenue dedicated to the Housing Trust Fund derived from developments built on formerly-owned City property from 40% to 100%.

The Resolution also stipulated that the total tax revenue generated by this resolution shall be applied as follows: 40% will maintain the existing allocation to the Housing Trust Fund; 40% shall be applied to providing affordable housing in homestead preservation districts; and 20% shall be applied to providing affordable housing development in high opportunity areas, which are areas with access to education, economic mobility, housing, and transportation.

Resolution No. 20160616-030 also directed the City Manager to transfer 100% of the property tax revenue derived from all properties within the desired development zone not on the tax roll to the Housing Trust Fund.

Direction:

The City Manager is directed to alert the Council via memorandum when the Housing and Planning Department intends to allocate funds from the Housing Trust Fund to pay for staff. Further, the City Manager is directed to include this expenditure as a line item in the Housing Trust Fund portion of the proposed budget.



Austin Public Health Neighborhood Centers

Background:

Neighborhood Centers provide a variety of social services to help low- and moderate-income residents achieve maximum self-sufficiency and physical and economic health.

The full range of services provided by Neighborhood Centers includes:

- basic services, such as food assistance and free transportation passes;
- health services, such as cholesterol and high blood pressure screenings; and
- case management services in the form of employment support and rent or utility payment assistance.

In 2017, an audit was conducted to determine if Neighborhood Centers are effectively meeting the needs of low- and moderate-income residents. The audit found that, “according to the surveys conducted by Neighborhood Centers in Fall 2016 and July 2017, 94% of residents who visited Neighborhood Centers reported being ‘very happy’ or ‘happy’ with their services and locations.” However, the audit also found that walkability / accessibility, funding, and lack of community awareness served as barriers for households that would be eligible for the services provided at the Neighborhood Centers. At that time, in response to accessibility concerns, Austin Public Health was working to establish mobile outreach sites, as well as beginning the process of identifying locations for new Neighborhood Centers. Further, Austin Public Health proposed construction of three new Neighborhood Center locations with the addition of 12 new Neighborhood Center staff to bring Neighborhood Center services into areas with high need.

Regarding funding issues, Austin Public Health indicated that lack of funding prevented the hiring of necessary staff; resulted in limited training opportunities to existing staff; created an inability to build the capacity to expand food distribution events to new, more accessible locations; and resulted in deferred technology improvements which could be used to increase remote access to Neighborhood Center services for residents across Travis County.

Further, the audit recommended that the City initiate a broad community awareness campaign regarding the Neighborhood Centers, a recommendation with which Austin Public Health concurred; however, Austin Public Health was concerned that the Neighborhood Centers would not be able to effectively meet any new community demand due to lack of funding.

Direction:

The City Manager is directed to 1) provide an update on the 2017 audit and 2) conduct a detailed gaps and needs assessment of the City’s existing and projected Neighborhood Centers should the annual grant-required assessment not be sufficient to the intent of this budget rider. The City



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Manager shall provide the Council with a memorandum that details all pertinent updates related to the findings of the 2017 audit, including strategies for improving accessibility of Neighborhood Center services, expanding service delivery into areas with high concentrations of low- and moderate-income residents, and creating and deploying a community-wide outreach plan. The City Manager is directed to provide a detailed breakdown of all unmet personnel, capital, social service funding, and other budgetary needs that would enable the Neighborhood Centers to meet existing and future community demand. The City Manager is directed to provide the Council with this information no later than March 2022 so the Council can be well-poised to make any necessary budget amendments in the FY 22-23 budget process.



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Right to Return - Right to Stay / Preference Policy

Background:

In 2018, Council approved Resolution No. 20180308-010, directing the City Manager to craft a policy that provides prioritization of housing resources for low- and moderate-income households with long-time generational ties to Austin who have experienced displacement or are at the risk of displacement. In November 2019, staff issued a response that detailed Austin Housing Finance Corporation's proposed policy pilot at six affordable rental housing locations and five affordable homeownership locations. This pilot was intended to inform the policy's expansion to other affordable housing opportunities. The memo stated that they would provide an update to Council prior to the beginning of the budget process for FY 2020-2021, which includes recommendations on additional resources needed to expand the preference policy to units beyond those in the AHFC portfolio.

Currently, staff estimate a budgetary need to conduct outreach and marketing to reach communities with historical ties to the area, BIPOC communities, and vulnerable populations. With anti-displacement efforts focused on home ownership and wealth-building, staff believe that we be able to utilize some displacement funding for these efforts. Should additional funding needs arise, the City Manager is directed to report back to Council as soon as possible.

In addition, staff believe that other unmet budget needs include incentives to encourage private for-profit and nonprofit affordable housing developers to incorporate the city's preference policy into their homeowner and tenant selection criteria policies.

Direction:

The City Manager is directed to estimate the costs and draft program guidelines for such an incentive and return to Council via memorandum by Spring 2021. The City Manager is also directed to report other budgetary needs for the successful expansion of the policy to Council prior to the FY 22-23 budget process.



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West Campus Lighting

Background:

Based on information from staff, the proposed budget includes sufficient funding for Austin Energy to complete the recommendations from the West Campus Lighting Survey to install 228 additional streetlights throughout the area beginning in January 2022.

Direction:

The City Manager is directed to expedite this project as feasible, including considering the option of expediting right of way permits or otherwise accelerating the timeline.